IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An apparatus for transmitting user equipment specific information from a base station to a user equipment in a cellular communication system[[;]] , the apparatus comprising:

a processor [~~means~~] for combining user equipment specific information for a plurality of user equipment to generate combined user equipment specific information;

an encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding the combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the plurality of user equipment; and

a transmitter [~~means~~] for transmitting the jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information in a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] is a time slot.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] is a single time code frequency resource allocation unit.

Claim 4 (Cancelled)

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding is operable to jointly encode user equipment specific information associated with all user equipment of the plurality of user equipment.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 [4] wherein the encoding comprises forward error correcting coding.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 [4] wherein the user equipment specific information comprises a plurality of parameters each having a number of possible values, and wherein the encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding is operable to encode the plurality of parameters by encoding a combined parameter having a combined number of possible values equal to the product of the number of possible values of the plurality of parameters.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the user equipment specific information comprises power control information.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the user equipment specific information comprises synchronisation information.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the user equipment specific information comprises only synchronisation information.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the user equipment specific information is associated with an uplink channel from each of the plurality of user equipment.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a controller [~~means~~] for setting a transmit power for the single allocation of

[~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] in response to a transmit power requirement of the plurality of user equipment.

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the transmitter is capable of [~~further comprising means for~~] transmitting position information indicative of a position of user equipment specific information for a first user equipment.

Claim 14 (Previously Presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the user equipment specific information is control information associated with High Speed Downlink Packet Access (HSDPA) service.

Claim 15 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein the user equipment specific information is associated with an uplink dedicated physical channel (DPCH) of the HSDPA downlink packet data service.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding is operable to encode the combined user equipment specific information by using processing algorithms of a group of algorithms used by a plurality of services.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the cellular communication system is a Time Division Duplex (TDD) cellular communication system.

Claim 18 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in claim 16 wherein the cellular communication system is the UTRA (UMTS (Universal Mobile Telecommunication System) Terrestrial Radio Access) TDD cellular communication system specified by the 3rd Generation Partnership Project.

Claim 19 (Original): An apparatus as claimed in claim 18 wherein the user equipment specific information consists of Transmit Power Control (TPC) and Synchronisation Shift (SS) data.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a processor [~~means~~] for determining a transmit power of the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] in response to a number of user equipment for which the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] comprises user equipment specific information.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 further comprising a processor [~~means~~] for determining an encoding process for the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] in response to a number of user equipment for which the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] comprises user equipment specific information.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 21 wherein the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] does not comprise verification data.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the transmitter [~~means~~] for transmitting is operable to transmit user equipment specific information for a first user in intermittent single allocations of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] corresponds to a minimum size transmission block of user equipment specific information which can be transmitted by the transmitter [~~means for transmitting~~].

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein the apparatus is a base station.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): A user equipment for receiving user equipment specific information from a base station in a cellular communication system[[;]] , the user equipment [~~apparatus~~] comprising:

a receiver [~~means~~] for receiving a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] comprising jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the [~~a~~] plurality of user equipment; and

a processor [~~means~~] for determining user specific information for the user equipment from the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): A user equipment as claimed in claim 26 wherein the processor is arranged to decode [~~combined user equipment specific information is jointly encoded; and wherein the means for determining comprises means for decoding~~] the jointly

encoded combined user equipment specific information and select [~~for selecting~~] the user equipment specific information for the user equipment.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): A cellular communication system comprising:

a first apparatus for transmitting user equipment specific information from a base station to a user equipment, the first apparatus comprising:

a processor [~~means~~] for combining user equipment specific information for a plurality of user equipment to generate combined user equipment specific information,

an encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding the combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the plurality of user equipment, and

a transmitter [~~means~~] for transmitting the jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information in a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~]; and

the user equipment comprising:

a receiver [~~means~~] for receiving a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] comprising jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the [~~a~~] plurality of user equipment; and

a processor [~~means~~]for determining user specific information for the user equipment from the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): A method of transmitting user equipment specific information from a base station to a user equipment in a cellular communication system[[;]] , the method comprising, at a base station [~~the steps of~~]:

combining user equipment specific information for a plurality of user equipment to generate combined user equipment specific information;

jointly encoding the combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the plurality of user equipment; and

transmitting the jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information in a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): A method of receiving user equipment specific information from a base station in a cellular communication system[[;]] , the method comprising, at a user equipment [~~the steps of~~]:

receiving a single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~] comprising jointly encoded combined user equipment specific information for at least two of the [a] plurality of user equipment; and

determining user specific information for the user equipment from the single allocation of [~~minimum~~] transmission resource [~~unit~~].

Claim 31 (Cancelled)

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): An apparatus as claimed in claim 5 wherein the user equipment specific information comprises a plurality of parameters each having a number of possible values, and wherein the encode processor [~~means~~] for jointly encoding is operable to encode the plurality of parameters by encoding a combined parameter having a combined number of possible values equal to the product of the number of possible values of the plurality of parameters.